THE DAIRY OF ZINA HYDE
BATH IN 1811

This diary, selections from the year 1811, offers an insight into aspects of society in a Kennebec town in the early nineteenth century. Though the writer was obviously part of Bath’s upper class and his activities reflect that level of society, reflections of the broader community are clearly visible. At age nineteen, Zina Hyde came from Connecticut to begin work in his half-brother’s store. Having learned the mercantile business, he shortly became a partner there and eventually set up a successful store and ship chandlery at the corner of Front and Broad Street, where Bath Savings Institution now stands. He acquired the property now owned by Hyde School. He built a fine house near what is now that institution’s main gate; his orchard was where Fisher School stands.

Hyde was 24 years old in 1811 when this brief diary was written. In its pages appear his interests, ranging widely from literature, natural science and mathematics, to religious, political, maritime and military matters. More than sixty people are mentioned.

A man of faith, Hyde was deeply involved in one of the two quarreling Congregational churches in town and a close friend of the minister of the other. It was at about this time that he became interested in the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg, the Swedish theologian, continuing that interest to becoming one of the founders of Bath’s Church of the New Jerusalem, which is still active today.
DAIRY OF ZINA HYDE
- BATH IN 1811

Ap 4th Have conversation with Capt Mitchell & Capt Ames on the subj of establishing a reading room they both, think favorably of an attempt to establish an institution of the kind.

Ap 9th Impv Soc meet at our house Mr Jenks with us & lays before the society a Plan on which he wishes to have a reading Room established, & which he thinks of offering to the public for subscribers In a preamble to the pln. Mr. J. has taken a particular view of the Literary Institutions of the Town –

Ap 10th 1811. Spent the Ev agreeably with Mr & Mrs Greenwood at their house
Converse on The Politics of the Day – History. – Gen Read History. – comparative merit of French & English Authors, Study of the Law &c, &c. Mr. G views Blackstones commentaries to be the most valuable work. Of any work of the [law?] that has ever been published in the Eng’ Language, but considers Sullians Lectures, as approach near to them.

11th Fast Day Mr. Jenks gives 2 Sermons, on the Spiritual & Philosophical urged with clear & conclusive Logic dress’d in a plain but elegant stile, & delivered in the most feeling in spirit & in Truth,” Evening attend a N.C. 2 prayer meet

Wednesday 24 Plesaunt rode out to Mr Wm Vaughan’s 3 farm about 2 miles from Town
Mr. G. with Mary & John Henry accompanied Visit Mr. V. Garden & nursery which imbraces 4 acres under fine improv he has in his nursery about 12 m young fruit trees.

Merkantile business, & if he gives us full satisfaction I encourage Mr A that we will ive him some small privileges in the store for his own advantage, & assist him when of age if we find ourselves able. He hav prov’d faith full. He is to go into our service in 2 or three weeks. Spend a few howers very pleasantly with Mr Neimiah Percy who agrees with me precisely on the subject of Church gov’t –

Monday May 6, 1811

Election of Representatives S Davis, John Richardson & J. Hyde who are the Federal candidates are unanimously elected by (100 votes) a majority of 100 votes
Esq Winter addresses the people in fav’r of electing but one man to represent the town. Mr. Coffin answers the address & by adopting the very argument of Esq. Winter he probes the importance of sending 3 Rep’ & completely refutes the reasoning of the Esq--

Gen’ King viewing it to be important that it should be known that he was present after a volley of “hams & haws” intermix’d with some of “this (    )” & a little of “that (   )” commences an attact on Mr. C. & demands to know either of him or of the Fed’s Candidates wheather they will go for any less than customary pay or no. Mr. C. dogs the Gen about to such a note that he is obliged to run up a tree from whence he commences a blackguard attack on the Rep’s of the last year, in which he asserts thing which causes the chairman of the Selectmen (J.H.) to silence him with the imputation of falsehood – after which the meet goes on with out disorder.

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1 Jenks
2 N.C. – North Church
3 William Vaughan
4 From Town – Hyde was visiting ___Gillette in Hallowell and weto Vaughan’s farm in Hallowell.
5 J Hyde – Jonathan Hyde, Zina’s brother, also a store keeper in Bath
6 Esq. Winter
7 Gen’ King – William King
8 (J.H.) – John Hyde

Kennebec – Zina Hyde - 2
Evening. Visited Mr & Mrs Cummings. Mr. C reads from that part of his Cherebin in which he teats of the origin of letters or characters, which were at first mark resembling the hydroglifics. Dibate on with mutual [     ] on the existing errors of the Church, particularly those which represent God as being made up of Three distinct persons. --- converse on Mr Swedenborg's writ⁹

**Tuesday 7th** Rainey in the mor Afternoon pleasant do military duties with pleasure¹⁰

**Thursday May 9th 1811**

**Evening** Gersham leaves the house for his lodgings at the store about 10 o.c. a few minutes after which we are alarmed by discovering a very bright light which proves to be a large db¹ house owned by Mr.Owin & Mr [     ] which is consumed with most of its contents the property of 7 young Mechanics.

Gersham discovered the fire in going the store & gave the 1 alarm to the families otherwise a number of the families persons must inevitably have perish'd

May 14th – Mr. Hyde¹¹ set out for Boston in stage for Boston to attend Court –

**Sabbath June 2nd** In consequence of th N.Curch hav⁸ accepted a letter of advices from the Rev'd Mess' [     ] Belden & Bailey advising s'd

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⁹ Swedenborg – At this point in his life, Hyde was part of one of the two Congregational churches in Bath but was increasingly interested in writings of Emanuel Swedenborg, gathering with friends to read and discuss that writer’s works. Eventually, Hyde was part of a group that founded Bath’s Church of the New Jerusalem, sited at Middle and Winter Street.

¹⁰ Military duties – Hyde was a member of Bath’s militia, eventually rising to an officer’s position.

¹¹ Mr. Hyde – Jonathan Hyde was a representative from the Bath area to the General Court, or Legislature in Boston, Maine still being part of Massachusetts at the time.
there had been a Gun discharge twice & that one man way lying dead in the street & that others were wounded -

I met Mr Hyde at the door with whom I proceeded to the dead man who proved to be a sailor by the name of McClain. he was disguised, having his face covered with lamp black & oil, & had one ball which went between his navel & breast bone – 2 through his right thigh & one through his rist. – from the spot where he lay, we sent to Mrs Fitt’s where lay a wounded man apparently irrecoverably – having 2 balls through his body.

½ past 12 call upon to act as one of the jury of inquest on the body of McClain which kept me up until about 3 o.c. A.M.

June 20 This night the wounded man above alluded to, dies

July 1 Call on Col’ Sewall he relates to me the history of the formation of a Christian society & Church & also of the rise of the south society & Church in this town together with some account of the opposition which was made by Mr. King Mr Webb & others to the settlement of a minister (Mr Wallis) in which I can discover much reason for the original existence of the unpleasant feelings in the minds of members of the N. Church against members of the South C. but can discover no Christian reason for those feelings be any longer indulged today as a body.

Met with Deacon Marsh with whom hae so conversation on the differences of opinion existing in the church. Dr. Marsh & myself agree precisely in the opinion that the S.C is a church of Christ & that they are entitled to our fellowship.

The proprietors of the Reading room meet this day and adjourn to the 8th inst.

Evening meet with the Bath Lt. Infantry – At Nicholas’s Hall for exercising. ---

July ( ) Myself & 2 others spend the evening in prayer for the reformation of the youth’s of the town as is our stated but secret practice monthly.

July 11 1811 Erastus returned from Bristol goes to work on board the Brig belonging to Mess Richardson in which he is to take a voyage

12th Feel the [ ] of my evil world to an almost overwhelming degree. My soul is tormented by an envy and jealousy. Too those who are in any likelihood of vieing with me in attaining any earthly object.

This is an unhappy state and offensive to God. I have looked too much on the thing of the world --- may God grant to me a release from them and rescue me from the dominions of satan.

But I think that I feel myself enabled to draw near to God in prayer whom I find ever ready to help in all times of need ---

Wednesday 17 Wait on Wm H. to the reading room.

W.H. speaks of society on Portland as being not so good in any point of view, as in Bath, he laments the want of taste for literary improvement in the young men of Portland.

July 25 1811 The B.L. Infantry meet on this day and make a choice H.G. Allen for their Cap in the room of Cap. Clap Ensign, Wm Stevens for their 1st Sirgeant Wm Torrey for their Ensign – in each of which election the most perfect harmony & unanimity prevailed, a very agreeable circumstance. ---

25th Brig Augustus saild for Gibraltar saild, with Mr Green Richardson, and as supercargo & Brother Erastus on board

Spent the evening at Mr. Davises Mr. Jenks advances the ides of an unlimited atmosphere with which am much pleas’d – Mr. Hammatt

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12 Mr. Wallis

13 B.L. Infantry – Bath Light Infantry
that of the Elements being reduced to 2 in number

27th Consulted the Encyclopedia on the article Elements with much satisfaction –

July 31st [       ] & Mr Jenks Misses Porter, Jenks, - Boynton Cap't Porter & Mr Ogry spent the ev at our house conversation mostly on natural History

On August 19th, Hyde set out for an inland journey with Elisha Mills Ely, an old friend from Connecticut. They went as far east as Bristol, and then up the shore of the Kennebec, crossing the river at Norridgewock and then to Farmington, south to Brunswick and home.

Wednesday August 21st … into the pleasant town of Winslow and about 9 o.c. rode from Hallowell before breakfast which is 20 miles. After havr refreshed our selves crossed the Sebasticook leaving our chaise on te eastern side and passed up the K on its eastern banck over a Slate quarry for about half a mile to Teconic falls, which extends about the same distance up & down the river & in that distance, falls about 42 feet – spent some time in examining the Rocks, Shores and seeing some lumber pass the falls, then returned to the very pleasant situation on the point of land between the K & Sebasticook on which is standing one Blockhouse which is the only remains of the once noted Fort Halifax built in the year 1754.

Recrossed the Sebasticook and after having spent 5 hours a rambling under an extreme hot sun proceeded up the east side of s river 5 mi to Clinton where we crossed a bridge near which is something of a fall in the river & a number of mills then took a western direction 2 miles over a bad piece of road across a neck of land to the Kennebec road on which we traviled up the Kennebec.

As night draws near, clouds thicken, & rain begins to fall, reach Esq’r Well’s inn, in Clinton, situated on the banck of the K about 15 miles from Winslow and 11 from Norrigwock &1-1/4 from the Iron Works in C-. Here made a stand for the night rec but ordinary attention and not extraordinary fair.

Thursday Aug 22 d Morning Foggy with considerable draft of water. About 6 a.m. walked to the Iron Works with Mr. Ely where they had employed in mak’g Iron with 3 persons with one fire which they could make 1 t 200 tt pr day The ore is found in a swampy tract of land which lies about 21/2 miles from the works.

The land is cov’d with a growth of small trees & brush, after removing this, with about 6 inches of the surface of the dirt, the Bog ore is found from 1 to 11/2 f under which is a hard sandy pan about 8.o.c cross the K into Fairfield ….

Farmington Friday Aug 23d Rose early MR. Ely complained much of hav’g been troubled with bugs, which happened not to affect me there having been a very heavy fall of rain in the night which caused me to sleep sounder than usual.

Saturday Aug 24th Morning Rain Dine at Capt Bakers in Litchfield and reach Bath before dark during our journey had frequent occasion from hav’g some evangelical Primers to distribut to inquire of poor Children if they could read, but found to our regret that many 12 years of age could not.

Thus ended a very pleasant tour in which I exp’d high satisfaction from enjoying the company of my Friend, Ely from visiting with him a number of my other friends and very pleasant part of Maine which possesses very high advantages in point of soil, springs, brooks, ponds & rivers with a hardy industrious, not to say enlightened people spread over its surface.

So that I must say that the advancement in agricultural improvement, and in apparent
Wealth far exceeds my highest expectations. --

The minds of the people much agitated in view of the prospects before us there being great reason to fear a war with Great Britain.

Wednesday 28 About this time am called on by Maj’ Reed to know if I will accept the appointment of Adjutant of the Regiment 1st B. 11th Div. at 1st my feelings very strongly opposed the idea of leaving the Bath Light Infantry which induces me almost to make a positive refusal in the afternoon Majr Clap called and proposed the same subject at which I agree to take it into consideration.

In a few days Col McCobb proposes the subject to me when I agree to take upon me that adjutancy as above.

Saturday Mr. Ely sails for Boston, but the wind a\v\^ failed the vessel return and stops until Sabbath afternoon when he remarks after hav\^\g made a visit of 28 days to my high gratification

[September] 7th Mr Jenks sets out on a journey to Penobscot on act of the Indians. Business extremely brisk which continues for a number of weeks.

Sept 13 Calld on Majr Jos F. Wingate newly appointed aid decamp to Genl King. He shows me his uniform & equipment which are truly elegant. Majr W. lends me a number of military books.

17th The Sun Eclipsed on the evening of the 6 or 7 discover a remarkable Comet in the N.W.

19th Friday evening Much occupied in attending to my duty as adjn t Business brisk but cash scarce

Oct 1, 1811 Spent the eve\^ at Mr Jenk’s Mr J informs me of Mr S. Sewall tak\g an interes in the works of Mr Swedenborg which gives me a high degree of pleasure

2nd Considerably occupied in my enquiries after Military knowledge and in my preparations for acting in my new military situation. ----

11th Ship Hallowell belong to Judge Dumer of H. which saild a short time since, arrives hav\g expd a gail in which she lost her main & misen mast.

Ship H. brings news that Capt Drummond in a ship from Wiscasset had retd in a wreckd condition which suppose were the two ships seen by Capt Harding

Evening call on Mr. Jenks with an intention of suggesting the following subjects to him if circumstances would admit

viz. 1 That I felt desirous there migh be some assistance rendered t Chares Adams son of Doctor S. Adams, that he might get an education, he being about 14. & giving good evidence of a chg of heart. -- In this found Mr. J. in perfect conincidence with my own although he has not given the subject previous attention, to render him [     ] on what measures could with propriety be pursued with regard to him.

2nd On the subject of a man s forming a matrimonial connection with his wives sister without going contrary to the command of God in Lev.18th chapter … Hyde’s diary, normally limited to brief topics, continues for five pages about this topic.

Saturday 12 Oct Our democratic legislature hav\^\g destroyed the old county Judicial of this state, Govl Gerry with his council rear a new one almost entirely of democratic timber.

25th & 26th Engaged most of the time in mak\^\g preparation for Regimental review, to be on the 28th hav\g prepared a draught of the formation of Regt &c I lay it before the field officers by whom it is approved & afterward practiced from.
Monday 28th rise very early & assist the quartermaster in laying out the ground for parade.

Hav® my uniform and equipment, both for myself and my horse, (all of which are new and in stile® except® pistols & spurs. Which are borrow’d) I make my 1st appearance as Adjutant of the 1st Regt 11 Dn® and performe the duty of my situation without much embarisment but what arises from want of discipline in the militia. The Regt is reviewed by Major Gen’l King, Col McCobb act® as Brigadier General & Major Nath’ Coffin as Inspector

*My equipm’ts &c. amt in al to

The day being uncommonly fine we get through and dismis’d in good season, after which the officers are all invited to partake of a generous entertainment at Gen’l King where about 40 ofcers meet & spend a part of the ev® very pleasantly.

Tuesday 29th Very pleasant accompany Gen King Col. McCob & about 14 other officers to Brunswick where we attend the Reviewing of 1 Regt of Infantry one Batallion of Calvary and one Batt® of Artillery, hav® the pleasure myself of accompanyng Majr Clap, through the inspection of the whole lines, after the discipline is over we retire with the Gen® & field officers to the Wash® hall where upwards of 40 officers partake of a sumptuous entertainment provide by Gen® King and return to Bath between 8 & 9 P.M.. -- hav® refused an invitation to accompany the gen officers, to Bowdoin for reviewing the 3 Regt.

Nov. 20th 1811 Evening snow begins to fall for the 1st time with us this season

21st Thursday very unpleasant. This day set aside as a day of Thanksgiv’g.

The scarcity, and high prices of English good, in Boston caused by the non-importation Law, and our hav® a good stock of piece goods on hand, causes us to defer going to Boston for the pres’ being at the same time willing to have an op’t to close up some of our acct® & collect in debts if possible -----

Monday Nov’ 25 1811

Call on Dr. Adams but on acct of himself and wife being from home return to Mr. Jenks’ where spend the ev® very agreeably

Converse on the subject of mathematics, which as a study Mr. J views as exceeding appealed to the human mind. And as a science necessary for the effective pursuit of almost all other sciences, and of utmost utility in the common affairs of all men.

Consequently Mr. J. recommended to me to pursue the acquaintance with the science whenever convenient opportunity should offer.

Dr. Stockbridge being at this time attending on th vaccine inoculation among Mr J’s children this conversation is directed to the advantage of the discovery, I not hav® had the kine or small pox am induced to borrow of Mr J. Dr Waterhouses Treatise of that subject, & after hav® read it, come fully perswaded in fav’ of K.D.

Mr Jenks advises me to subscribe for the Edinburg Enciclpaidea --

Wednesday 27th

Undergo an inoculation with vaccine virus by Dr. Stockbridge

Monday Dec 2nd

Spend the evening at Dr Adam’ with a numer of bretherin of the N Church where we converse on the subject of open communion with the S. Church. On which subject a number of us still continue to differ still I return home with some degree of satisfaction arising from a belief that that those who differ from me in sentiment with
regard to this subject, are united with me in hart through love to our Lord J. Christ.

Friday 6th Dec
9th day after having been inoculated, the virus appears to work very well. this day accidently rub off the Pustule which forms again in a bout 24 hours, the virus which remained in the outer edge of the sore or pustule. (altho' hardy to be discovered when the top was 1st rubbed off.) has generated a new virus so rapidly as to cause the pustule to resume its former favourable appearance which was a striking resemblance of the Mustard seed. From this time the appearance begins to ch§ the hardness of flesh which accompanied the pustules gradually spread§ accompanied with a considerable degree of inflammation which is immediately followd by the usual symtims, which do not prove sufficient to interrupt me in business in the least --- About the 18th day after inoculation every disagreeable sensation subcides and the sore heals up without the gathering of pus.

Dec 9th Congress, now in cessions maintain a high war tone tod’s G. Britain --

Dec 20th Clear and Cold but no snow. Hav§ dailey heard from Erastus who was with Cap' ich at Gibraltar, through the medium of Mr. G. Richardson’s letters, were lead to indulge the pleasing anticipation of his speedy return to our embraces. Until this morning when Cap' Church calld -- and informed me that Cap' Rich had arvd – on which my mind run over a wide field of pleasure (in anticipation) which was to result from the safe return of my dear brother Erastus, but by the time I could observe that my brother was with him (think§ he might not know it) he continued that they had the misfortune to loose him, thus was all my fond hopes blasted & I left to mourn the premature death of a brother for whose welfare have ever felt a very strong emotion.

E was lost from the fore topsail yard when reefing the sail the velocity of the ships Brigs movement was so great, as together with the roughness of the sea as to prevent any attempt to recover him.

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This news is particularly painful to all of us, more deeply so to my Mother whose love for Erastus was uncommonly strong, but not withstanding it has a severe struggle with nature. She seems to bear it with Christian fortitude .

Could we entertain a comfortable hope that his spirit has fled to the abode of the blessed it would give us more consolation than to have him restored to a life of sin, but he is in the hands of God whose Glory will eventually be promoted.

Mr. G. Richardson speaks very faivourably of E’s health & conduct during the voyage

Dec 23 Call and spend 2 hours with Mr. Jenks who offers a multitude of consol§ & improv§ thoughts.

Mr Jenks has the goodness to lend me Swedenborg on Influence &c. also L. Chesterfields Letters, which last I only wish to reperuse hav§ once read them. ---

Professor Abbot15 informs me that he has lately been on to Boston and recd a part of a Donation made by the late Mr Jas’ Bowdoin to the Bowdoin College consisting of the whole of his private Library*, Pictures (excepting family ones) and Philosophical apparatus, estimated at not less than 10,000 doll’s all of which are now removed to Brunswick except§ the pictures which are to be left until the spring.

* Amounting to 3000 volumes

December 24th 1811 As yet have enjoyd no snow to speak of this season, nor much very

15 Abbot –Bowdoin’s first librarian, firstprofessor of languages/literature and early overseer of the college.

Kennebec – Zina Hyde - 8
cold weather, until this morning which opens with a most tremendous Snow wind Storm.

**Wednesday 25th** The storm subsides in some measure, but the violence of the wind has prevented the snows affording us any sleighing

**Friday eve (27th)** spend at Col’ Sewalls in a very pleasant manner.

Col’ S. observes (among other things) that when agent for the lands belonging to Bow’d College corporation, it was his advise to that corporation (of which he was a member) to sell to the settlers those land’ which were taken up, at the value of them when first settled with the interes, which sale might then have been affected without difficulty but some other members among whom was judges Parker & Lee were opposed to such a step, chusing rather to contend in law for the then present worth of wild land, which latter step they are to this day in pursuit of.

Also that he might have sold the timber which cov’d a large tract of land for upwards of $100 per acre (& proposed such sale) which lands hav’d now been plundered of the timber would not fetch more than 3$ per acre.

And now I again find myself brought to the close of another year in the enjoyment of health and prosperity for which I feel reason to exercise the most devout gratitude to my merciful heavenly Father who has been pleased to bestow his smiles on me through all of my various duties & connections.

During the past year had my military situation changed from that of Sergeant in L’ Infantry to the Adjutancy of the Reg’ a birth which was unsought by me, but urged upon me by the Field Officers of the Reg’
Monday Nov. 10

Spent this evening at Dr. Collins' with a number of gentlemen of the 4th Church; where we conversed on the subject of our connection with the 4th Church in which subject a number of us still continue to differ. Still remain here 20 or 30 whom I sometimes see with some degree of satisfaction arising from our belief that they do not differ from me.

Sentiment would seem to this subject, and I have with me in heart through love to our Lord J. C. Nov. 10, 1798

The body after having been inoculated, the crew appears to work very well; the day was at first very mild off. The Pestilence which grows again, in a boat 24 hours, assum'd which remained in the water was of dangerous nature (if it should be discovered where the ship was or whether it was off.) but general rumour goes as rapidly as to endanger the whole vessel to recover its former function. The appearance which was a frequent recurrence of the Macleanse, from this appearance, the Macleanse is not what appears.
25th. Engaged most of the men in urgent preparation for Regimental review to be on the 28th. I have prepared a sketch of the formation of the 7th Dragoons and will cause the same to be exam'd by other officers who were present from Sabbath, the brigade parades in George town & in the evening I was sent to the must house Monday the 1st & early the 2nd the quarter masters were laying out the ground for parade.

Have collected my uniform & equipments, both for myself & horse (all of which are fine) & in order except pistol & sword, which are borrowed. Sound my 1st appearance as Adjutant of the 7th Dragoons.

and performed the duty of my station with out much assistance but what arises from want of discipline in the Militia.

The 7th is reviewed by Maj. Genl. Vose Col. Gillett as Deputy General & Maj. Genl. Emmons as inspector.

The day being uncommonly fine we got through with the inspection in good order, after which the officers are all invited to partake of a generous entertainment at Genl. King's where about 1500 we & a good part of the ladies were present.

Sunday 29th Very pleasant weather accompanied the Genl. Col. Albright & about 300 other officers to Demoiselle, where we attend the morning service.